



Corps of Engineers

# Bigwater News

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## National Public Lands Day Celebrated at St. Lucie

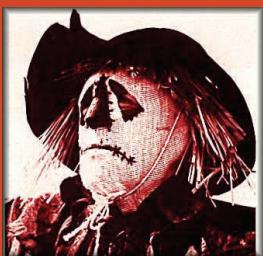
On Saturday, September 22, forty local volunteers came out to St. Lucie North Recreation Area to celebrate National Public Lands Day. Volunteers helped in blazing a new nature trail and assisted in maintaining an existing trail. The outreach event gave citizens the opportunity to support and participate in the local community while increasing opportunities for outdoor recreation.

Boy Scouts of America Troop 110 from Wellington and Troop 822 from Palm City continued construction of a 5K (3.1 Mile) trail that meanders through the woods at St. Lucie North Recreation Area. The trail is located on the South Fork of the St. Lucie River just past the St. Lucie Lock and Dam.



Other volunteers helped clear dead trees and clean-up debris from the interpretive trail in the North Recreation Area. After the mornings hard work volunteers

enjoyed lunch which was provided by the Treasure Coast Presbyterian Church with additional donations by Wal-Mart and the First United Methodist Church in Stuart. All volunteers received a 2007 National Public lands Day poster, a fee-free day pass, and certificate of appreciation.



## Cabbage Palms Salvaged for Swallow-tailed Kite Nature Trail

Approximately 600 cabbage palms have been uprooted from the banks of Harney Pond and Indian Prairie Canals—tributaries of Lake Okeechobee—over concerns that their presence could jeopardize the integrity of the dikes. Cabbage Palms, also known as Sabal Palms, are native to Florida and were adopted as the official state tree in 1953. They are slow growers and provide excellent roosting and nesting habit for raptors. Because of these attributes, the environmental stewardship staff set out to salvage as many of these trees as possible. Over 100 palms were flagged in Indian Prairie Canal to be transplanted at various lakeside sites. Six of largest trees will be introduced into the Clewiston office butterfly garden. The bulk of the palms will be planted at the Swallow-tailed Kite Nature Trail off Highway 78 near Sportsman Canal.

### Transplanting Tip



The greatest loss of water in newly dug Cabbage Palms occurs through the leaves. To minimize this, one half or more of the older leaves should be removed at the time of digging. The remaining leaves should be tied together in a bundle around the bud with twine. The best method of ensuring survival after transplanting to the landscape is to remove all leaves to help reduce stress. Cabbage Palms are different than other palms in that they must regenerate all new roots from the trunk after transplanting, which takes about eight months. Complete leaf removal may also be advisable during installation of any species where normal post-transplant

irrigation is impossible. However, many buyers will object to this practice for aesthetic reasons. Where practical, misting or irrigation of the foliage may reduce water loss during the transplant process, though there is an accompanying risk of increasing disease problems in the canopy. (Information modified and reprinted from <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/EP001>)

Above photo shows a line of Cabbage Palms that were removed from Indian Prairie Canal.

Right photo shows Cabbage Palms being replanted at the Corps' Swallow-tailed Kite Nature Trail, which is currently underdevelopment.



## Canaveral Lock Rip Rap Project

The enduring forces of wave action that pound the levees of Canaveral Lock lead to erosion and demand for routine maintenance. Rip rap that protects levee banks east of the Lock slowly have been plucked from the shoreline by incoming waters and claimed by the sea. SFOO's Contract and Navigation sections have embarked on an effort to restore and improve the eroding levee banks.

Rip rap refers to large stones placed on soil surfaces to reduce erosion by flowing water.

New rip rap and bedding stone are currently being added to the north and south levees, which now stand at six feet above sea level. The added materials will increase the protection the levees provide and increase their overall heights to nine feet above sea level. Special Alabama Greystone (a type of limestone) rip rap was selected over the more commonly used granite rip rap because of its greater density and ability to remain in place.



Bedding stone is gravel and/or pebble sized rock laid over a surface to fill irregularities between it and a component placed on top of it (rip rap in this case). Bedding stone also serves as a foundation to support stacked riprap.

Work is being conducted by R & D Maintenance Services Inc. and is expected to reach completion within the first week of October.

Aerial view of Canaveral Lock



South Levee East of Canaveral Lock



Rip Rap  
Bedding Stone

## Biologists Participate in National Migration Count

On September 22, biologists in the environmental stewardship section of the South Florida Operations Office participated in the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual North American Migration Count. The Migration Count takes place across the entire 48 states and consists of two daylong annual counts: the second Saturday in May, and the third Saturday in September, differing from Christmas Bird Counts which span over several weeks. In Migration Counts, the boundary of an individual county serves as a count area. Various teams of individuals spread coverage to as many habitat types as possible to get at least an indication of the presence or absence of a species. Ideally coverage should be proportional to the area of the habitat in the county, but participants sometimes tend to be a bit bias to getting into woodlands for viewing warblers than spending time looking in pastures and difficult access areas like marshes.

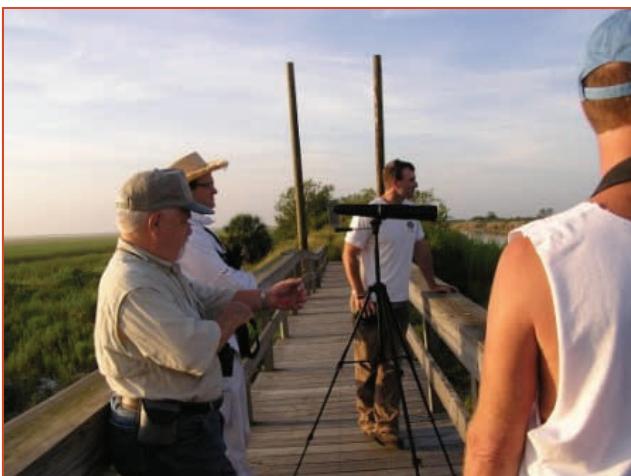
After the daylong count is completed teams provide their data to their respective county coordinator, who in turn forwards the information to the state coordinator who see that it is incorporated into a large database. This year's event in Glades and Hendry Counties tallied 11,244 individual birds that included 112 different species. The goal of obtaining these long-term population "snapshots" is to discover and better understand migration patterns particular to individual species, to aid in developing effective and innovative conservation management strategies for future use.

The North American Migration Count in Florida is sponsored by Florida Ornithological Society (FOS), and is supported by local Audubon Societies, local bird clubs, and other interested organizations.

Migration Count data can be viewed on the FOS web site at [www.fosbirds.org/](http://www.fosbirds.org/)

For additional information about this year's count contact Florida State Coordinator, Bob Henderson: 497 Steone House Rd, Tallahassee, FL 32301-3357; 850-575-6610; [bob@rkhenderson.com](mailto:bob@rkhenderson.com).

Some of the article information was modified from Georgia Ornithological Society webpage at <http://www.gos.org/namc/namc.html>



Biologists Jon Morton and Mike Boles (not shown) were part of a monitoring team that included Dr. Paul Gray—Science Coordinator of Audubon of Florida and Steve Buczynski—President of Hendry/Glades Audubon.



John Morton sighted all of the three American Redstarts recorded for the day in Hendry & Glades County.

## Halloween Holiday Trivia



Orange and black are Halloween colors because orange is associated with the Fall harvest and black is associated with darkness and death.

Jack o' lanterns originated in Ireland where people placed candles in hollowed-out turnips to keep away spirits and ghosts on the Samhain holiday.

Pumpkins also come in white, blue and green. Great for unique monster carvings!

Halloween was brought to North America by immigrants from Europe who would celebrate the harvest around a bonfire, share ghost stories, sing, dance and tell fortunes.

Tootsie Rolls were the first wrapped penny candy in America.

The ancient Celts thought that spirits and ghosts roamed the countryside on Halloween night. They began wearing masks and costumes to avoid being recognized as human.

Halloween candy sales average about 2 billion dollars annually in the United States.

Chocolate candy bars top the list as the most popular candy for trick-or-treaters with Snickers #1.

Halloween is the 2nd most commercially successful holiday, with Christmas being the first.

Bobbing for apples is thought to have originated from the roman harvest festival that honors Pomona, the goddess of fruit trees.

Black cats were once believed to be witch's familiars who protected their powers.





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## Help Wanted:

If you would like to contribute ideas, information or photographs to the BigWater News email or phone the newsletter editor, Michael Boles:

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Much appreciation to the following individuals for their contributions to this month's newsletter:

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Steve Sullivan  
Adam Tarpilee  
Joe Warn  
Hope White  
Tyson Zobrist



Corps of Engineers

# SFOO Chief, Steve Sullivan Leaves for Regulatory

Steve Sullivan recently accepted a reassignment position in the Corps' Regulatory Division. He is now serving as Chief of the South Permits Branch in Fort Myers, and began work on September 30.

Steve had been with the South Florida Operations Office from 1985-1998 holding various positions, which included Park Ranger, Assistant Chief, and Chief. He also worked in the Regulatory Division in Fort Myers from 1998-2002. Steve began his career in the Pittsburgh District back in 1978 working in temporary status as a GS-04 Park Technician. You've come a long way, Steve! The SFOO family wishes you all the best and continued success.



**The Big Cheese Moves On!**

Image is not actual size. Steve is a much bigger Cheese.

<http://www.saj.usace.army.mil/sfoo/BigWater/BigWaterNewsArchives.htm>